

proteolyzing the protein suspension at pH 3.5-6.0 for 10-12 hours in deionized water in the presence of 2-4 parts by weight of protease to give a mixture of oligopeptides,

chelating zinc ions with the mixture of oligopeptides in a weight ratio of zinc/oligopeptides of 1/1,000 to yield a zinc-oligopeptide solution, and

concentrating the zinc-oligopeptide solution to a solid content of 32-36% and drying to produce a zinc-oligopeptide powder.

#### REMARKS

Upon entry of the present amendment, claims 1-3 will remain pending in the above-identified application and stand ready for further action on the merits.

The amendment made herein to claim 2 does not incorporate new matter into the application as originally filed. In this respect, claim 2 has simply been amended in order to put the same into an independent format and alleviate the Examiner's concerns set forth in the Office Action under 35 USC § 112.

#### ***Claim Rejections Under 35 USC § 112***

Claim 2 has been rejected under 35 USC § 112, second paragraph. Reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection is requested based upon the amendment of claim 2 herein to an independent format. In this respect, the pH range recited in claim